

Danielle_Herrmann_FY26 Budget

Date of Public Hearing: April 7, 2025 and April 8, 2025

Danielle Herrmann
Takoma Park/Silver Spring, MD 20912

TESTIMONY: FY26 BUDGET
**Support for Funding Permanent Supportive Housing
and Disability Retrofitting of Housing**

TO: Council President Stewart, Vice President Jawando, and members of the County Council

FROM: Danielle Herrmann

My name is Danielle Herrmann. As a Maryland Clinical Medical Social Worker and elderly member of our community I am submitting this testimony in support of including \$13,735,903 for Permanent Supportive Housing and \$150,000 for Housing Disability Retrofitting in the FY26 budget, as recommended by Housing Justice Montgomery. Thank you for your consideration.

The safety, dignity, and worth of every person, especially the most vulnerable among us, is a widely recognized and shared value reflected in Montgomery County's policies, initiatives, and funding. County leaders and community members frequently express the importance of prioritizing these core values.

Helping individuals and families navigate the challenges of living with health challenges and under economic uncertainty has been my life's work. When conducting home health and hospice visits across our County I frequently encountered devastating stories of hardship. I've witnessed homelessness and unsafe living conditions due to the paucity of permanent supportive housing and disability retrofitting in Montgomery County.

It is paramount in these uncertain economic times that Montgomery County strategically funds these safeguards for our most vulnerable. These are community members, neighbors, friends, loved ones, and eventually could even be ourselves. None of us are immune to disabling mental and physical health conditions, job insecurity, and other drastic life experiences that could lead us to lose our housing or our ability to work. Funding Permanent Supportive Housing and accessible retrofitting for housing are essential to safeguard the wellbeing of community members who experience the most formidable challenges to exiting homelessness. Improving the lives of our most vulnerable shores up all our communities, which is an essential ameliorating factor as we navigate these uncertain times together.

I urge the Council to include in the FY26 Budget not only the \$13,398,372 for Permanent Supportive Housing as recommended by County Executive Marc Elrich, but to include the full \$13,735,903 necessary to adequately support current and new

residents in dire need of Permanent Supportive Housing. Additionally, I urge the Council to include \$150,000 to fund disability retrofits through non-profits, such as Rebuilding Together, to support the dignity and safety of all residents, including those with disabling conditions.

Thank you.